

THE 5TH ANNUAL MUNIN CONFERENCE ON SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING 2010 "OPEN ACCESS – THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE"

Jan Erik Frantsvåg

The 5th Munin Conference was held at the University of Tromsø on November 25th. This is an annual conference hosted by the University Library of Tromsø. The first conference was held in 2006, after the formal opening of Munin, the university's institutional repository.

The theme of the conference is always connected to scientific publishing, and often with an Open Access angle to it. This year it was wholly OA-related.

116 people from all over Norway had registered for the conference, a handful of no-shows made the real number of participants slightly over 100. Some local participants who didn't plan on taking part in the lunch also attended without registration. The organizers were pleased to see that the number of scientists in the audience was higher than it has ever been before, as they were eager to try to make scientists aware of the debates surrounding their publishing habits. This year's conference was held in English, in order to enable keynotes to take part in discussion, and as an attempt to recruit participants from abroad.

Curt Rice, Vice Rector of the University of Tromsø, opened the conference with some reflections on how OA not only could be a better way of disseminating publishing content, but a new way of doing things and create processes and products that were better than the traditional ones, not only mimicking them. Curt Rice is also chairman of the board of Cristin, the new national CRIS that has been established and starts functioning from January 1st 2011.

John Houghton of Victoria University in Melbourne (Australia) showed how the studies and reports of the economic effects of Open Access all showed that the return on investment in Open Access far exceeded any necessary investment. It is strange that the profitability of Open Access so far hasn't yet resulted in massive financing of OA at the national level in any country.

Jan Erik Frantsvåg of the University of Tromsø then talked about how the EU looks at OA, the OpenAIRE project and what special clause 39 really means when you combine various documents. The clause is much more strict and rigorous than it seems at first, and the clause is "drowned" in the mass of paper an EU project application is. Beneficiary, beware!

After lunch, Salvatore Mele, head of OA at CERN – remarkably calm and in high spirits after suffering a laptop breakdown, back-up malfunction and a car crash on the way to the airport, with a hasty re-authoring of his presentation during the first half of the conference as a result – presented some results of the SOAP project. This project studies both journals and researchers' attitudes to OA publishing. The numbers show large differences between large (professional) and small (institutional) publishers, and between authors from different fields and countries. One conclusion is that the large countries in the third and second world will be driving forces in OA. China, Salvatore said, are looking at 2050 with 20 to 30 million students. Current forms of dissemination just won't work! For those who want to know more, the SOAP project has a final workshop in Berlin in January where both results and raw data are presented. See <http://project-soap.eu/soap-symposium/>

Eiliv Lund, a senior researcher and acclaimed professor of community medicine from the University of Tromsø presented his personal reflections on Open Access. He particularly pointed to two areas where OA was important: In publishing for doctoral students, for whom speed of publishing was important to enable them to fulfil the requirements during the rather short time available to them; and for projects involving researchers from second or third world countries, or involving indigenous groups. For such partners, OA is the only means of getting access to what was produced in the projects.

Trine B. Haugen, Pro-Rector R&D at the Oslo University College, presented their OA policies and in particular their experiments with dis-incentives to authors who do not self-archive their articles. When allocating funds between units based on scientific production, articles that aren't deposited in ODA, the IR of Oslo University College, count only half compared to an article that is deposited. After a few months, ODA already have a significant number of articles compared to other institutions with much older repositories and a much larger production. All things point to that money motivates even scientists!

The last speaker was Pål Vegar Storeheier, Director of research at the University of Tromsø. He informed about the OA policy of the university, and why the

university had decided to make this policy. The policy states that students and researchers – as a general rule – shall self-archive in Munin (our IR), that researchers should consider OA and self-archiving policies when choosing between journals and that the University strives to make all our publications OA and encourage self-archiving of the published PDF from our publications.

All presentations will be made available on the internet shortly, both PowerPoint slides, and – hopefully – videotape of the presentations. More information will be made available on the conference website, <http://www.ub.uit.no/baser/ocs/index.php/Munin/MC5>

The annual Munin Conference is now well established as the prime OA-conference in Norway. The sixth Munin Conference will take place in Tromsø in the latter half of November 2011. More info will be coming as plans take shape, but you should already make a mental note to set aside time (and funding) to come to Tromsø!



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